

ART IN AMERICA *AND ELSEWHERE*
AN ILLUSTRATED BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE
VOLUME XIII • NUMBER V • AUGUST 1925



THE CLARENCE H. MACKAY COLLECTION OF
ITALIAN RENAISSANCE SCULPTURES

I.

MR. CLARENCE MACKAY'S Collection of Italian Renaissance Sculptures comprises a series of individual pieces of the highest quality and at the same time offers a clear idea of the art of the principal centres of Renaissance sculpture—Florence, Siena, Venice and Padua. This combination of rare quality in the individual object, with the impression of a historic whole, ought to be the goal of every good collection, but it is one which is seldom achieved.

Tuscan sculptures by the great masters of the early Florentine Renaissance occupy the premier place. Of these Donatello, Desiderio da Settignano, Benedetto da Majano, Verrochio and Pollaiuolo are represented.

Dr. Bode attributes to Donatello the bust in painted stucco of the youthful St. John the Baptist (Fig. 1), a particularly favorite theme of the Florentine sculptors of the period. This stucco, which was undoubtedly cast from the wellknown marble bust in the Louvre, is so

Translation by Mrs. Alice M. Sharkey.

Copyright, 1925, by Frederic F. Sherman

spirited and well executed as regards modeling and painting that it is very probably the work of none other than the creator of the marble itself. We are dealing here with a case similar to that of the marble relief of the Madonna by Agostino di Duccio in the Louvre and the similar stucco in the Bargello, which, however, is not identical in detail.¹ The stucco owing to its coloring and softer modeling is even more fascinating than the marble. To go so far as to declare, however—as has been done in both cases—that the stucco was a study and the marble a studio piece is unwarranted. There have, to be sure, been cases where the Italian sculptors made studies in stucco or plaster instead of the more generally used terra cotta, just as there are, contrarywise, casts made in terra cotta, and in fact in far greater number than is commonly realized. Generally speaking, however, it is easy to determine—mostly from the inner side—when a stucco relief is cast from the marble or sometimes from a terra cotta. It is certain, however, that the finest stucco reliefs were made in the artist's own ateliers, and likely often by the master himself, which we may assume to be true of our bust of the young St. John.

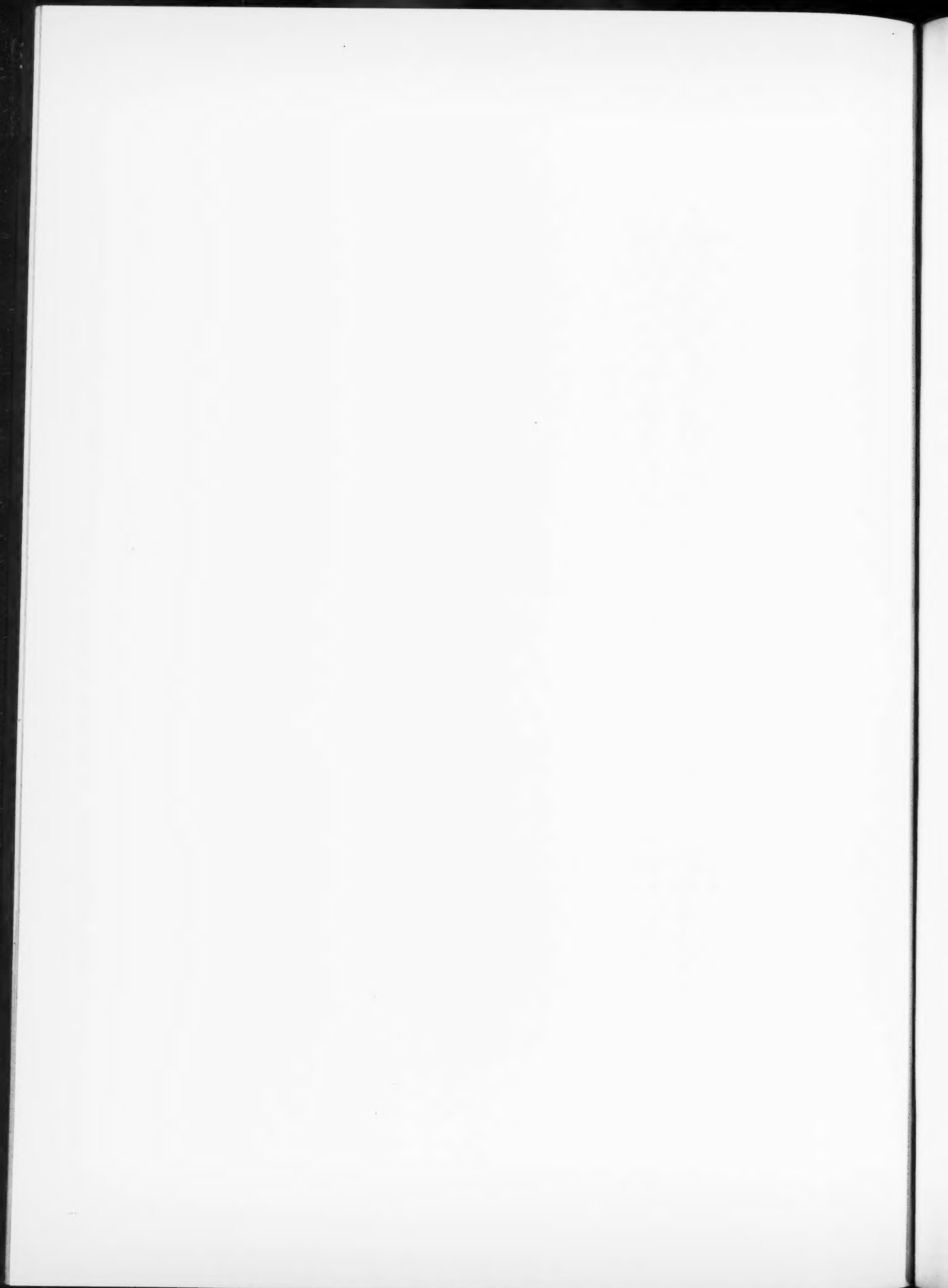
The marble bust in the Louvre has been diversely attributed to Donatello (Bode), and to Desiderio or Antonio Rosellino (Schubring, Venturi). Personally I feel that the bust in the Mackay Collection offers a clearer revelation of the master's qualities in many respects and suggests a higher ranking of this work than might be even expected from the marble. We do not find in Donatello's later pupils, particularly not in Rosellino's work, the inspiration and spiritual quality that are here brought to expression especially through the coloring. Desiderio comes nearer to this. In some of his busts of children he approaches Donatello so closely that it is difficult to distinguish between them.

As a matter of fact our bust shows close similarities to Desiderio's work. We find the same long oval of the face in the wooden statue of St. Magdalena in Santa Trinita, Florence, and the profile strikingly resembles that of the young St. John in the Louvre relief, representing Christ and St. John as children, and that of the so-called St. Catherine in Lord Wemyss' Collection. In fact, the delicate pointed nose, slightly protruding upper lip, parted from the lower to reveal the teeth, and long hair falling down the back are all more typical of Desiderio than of any other artist. True there was a time when Donatello was par-

¹A second example of this stucco has recently passed out of Florentine hands into an American collection.



FIG. 2. DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO: BUST OF A FLORENTINE LADY. (DETAIL)
Collection of Mr. Clarence H. Mackay, Roslyn, N. Y.



ticularly interested in delicate renderings of this theme of the young Baptist—during the period when he executed the two full length marble statues in the Bargello, about 1420-30, and it is to this period that we must assign the marble and stucco busts if we hold to the Donatello attribution.

Desiderio's extraordinary technique in marble is revealed by the wonderful female bust which belongs to the finest examples, not alone of his work, but of all early Florentine Renaissance sculpture (Fig. 2).

It is most interesting to compare the four Florentine portrait busts of the second half of the fifteenth century owned by Mr. Mackay. The "esprit" and aristocratic quality of Desiderio's work is contrasted with Benedetto da Majano's bourgeois and sober though striking characterization in his male bust in terra cotta from the collection of the Prince Liechtenstein (Fig. 5). The terra cotta bust of a man in helmet and armor from Charles Timball's collection is in its pointed, feathery execution characteristic of Pollaiuolo's emotional and accented manner; and Verrochio's powerful, almost baroque exuberance is exhibited in the painted terra cotta bust of Lorenzo de Medici.

Comparing all four of these busts with Donatello's portrait heads we find a growth in naturalistic portraiture, a sharpening and enrichment of detail, and on the imaginative side a greater refinement and sublimation of the personality. All of these traits are particularly noticeable in Verrochio's bust of Lorenzo which typifies the zenith of that power which this art adorned.

The Mackay bust assumes an important place among Desiderio's rare marble busts—we know only of six, of which three are in American collections. It is in splendid preservation—excepting the bust of Marietta Strozzi in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum—it is the only one in which the nose is intact and hardly any of the others have been so painstakingly worked out to the last minor details of the brocade pattern which we find only in this piece—the costumes on the other busts not being patterned. The detail is rendered with the most perfect freedom in delicate relief and yet with a softness that meets every surface play of light and shadow. The folds of the sleeves fall loosely, but the bodice is closely moulded to the form and presses softly into the flesh on the shoulders throwing the gentle curves of the neck into relief. The treatment of the hair and the modeling of the neck are vivid and delicate. This close observation of the details of the rear is scarcely to be found in any other of this master's busts.

The subject is neither so young nor so enchanting in type as Marietta Strozzi, but she possesses a dignity and a sure nobility of bearing that are quite unequalled. The sculptor has in remarkable fashion imbued his model with the peculiarities of his individual style—the slightly protruding upper lip, vibrating nostrils and the tender lines of the somewhat heavy eyelids—in contrast to the sharply stylized outlines of the eyes by Mino da Fiesole—the delightful realistically treated hair. The contrast between the loose sleeves and the tight bodice is found in other busts by this master and the figure is terminated by a girdle as in those of the Berlin and Morgan Collections. The name Isotta da Rimini is just as questionable as is that of Marietta Strozzi for some of the other busts, even more so perhaps, for we have had hitherto no reason to believe that Desiderio ever worked outside of Florence.

While we know only of female busts by Desiderio, those by Benedetto da Majano which have been preserved are all of men. Nor is this likely accidental. Just as the portrayal of young women and children appealed to the delicate and sensitive Desiderio so the reproduction of masculine power and vigour corresponded to the blunter nature of Benedetto da Majano. The terra cotta bust of a member of the Ginori family (Fig. 3) from the Liechtenstein Collection was formerly attributed to Antonio Rosellino. In my estimation, however, this is a characteristic work by Benedetto da Majano. It is, frankly, difficult to distinguish between the portrait busts of these two masters. In essence the difference lies in the fact that Rosellino, who was the elder by fifteen years, worked in the manner of the quattrocento in lower relief, whereas Benedetto strove for a fuller plastic form in accordance with the development of the art of sculpture in the transition period from the Quattrocento to the Cinquecento. Rosellino's modeling of surfaces, of the features and of the drapery, has about it something flat and applied, so to speak. His forms, too, like Desiderio's are slimmer, finer and more pointed than Benedetto's who tended toward a more massive and solid construction. Rosellino is prone to over elaboration in his modeling of surfaces and occasionally loses himself entirely in the minutiae of the features, whereas Benedetto simplifies the outline and his inner contours, in fact, often handles the features in a broadly decorative almost stylized fashion. Rosellino was prone to lend to his model an expression of conscious feeling—not to say sensibility—whereas Benedetto's pose and expression were straightforward and simple. These



FIG. 3. BENEDETTO DA MAJANO: TERRACOTTA BUST
Collection of Mr. Clarence H. Mackay, Rodlyn, N. Y.



FIG. 4. BENEDETTO DA MAJANO: MARBLE BUST OF PIETRO MELLINI
Museo Nazionale, Florence

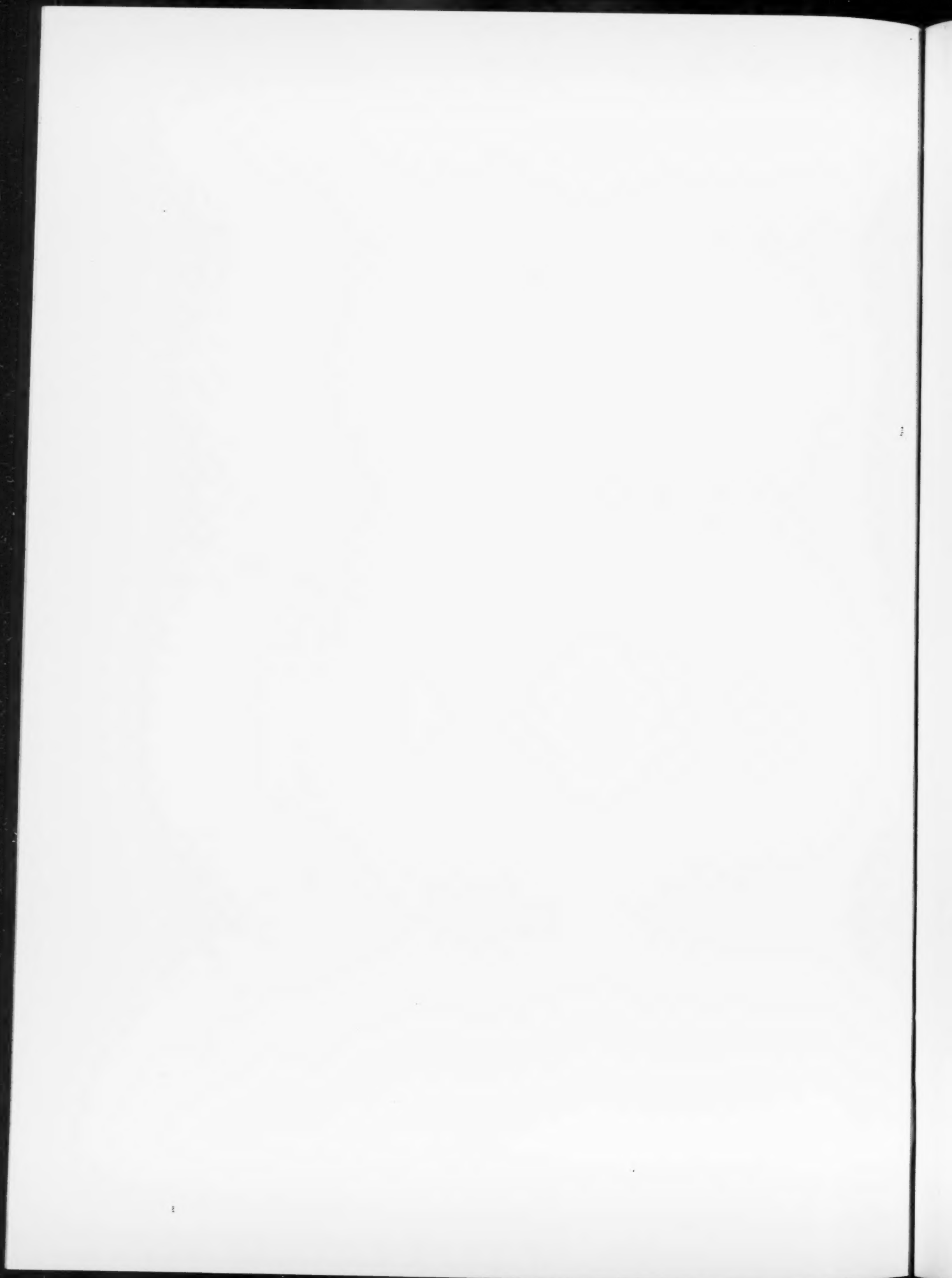
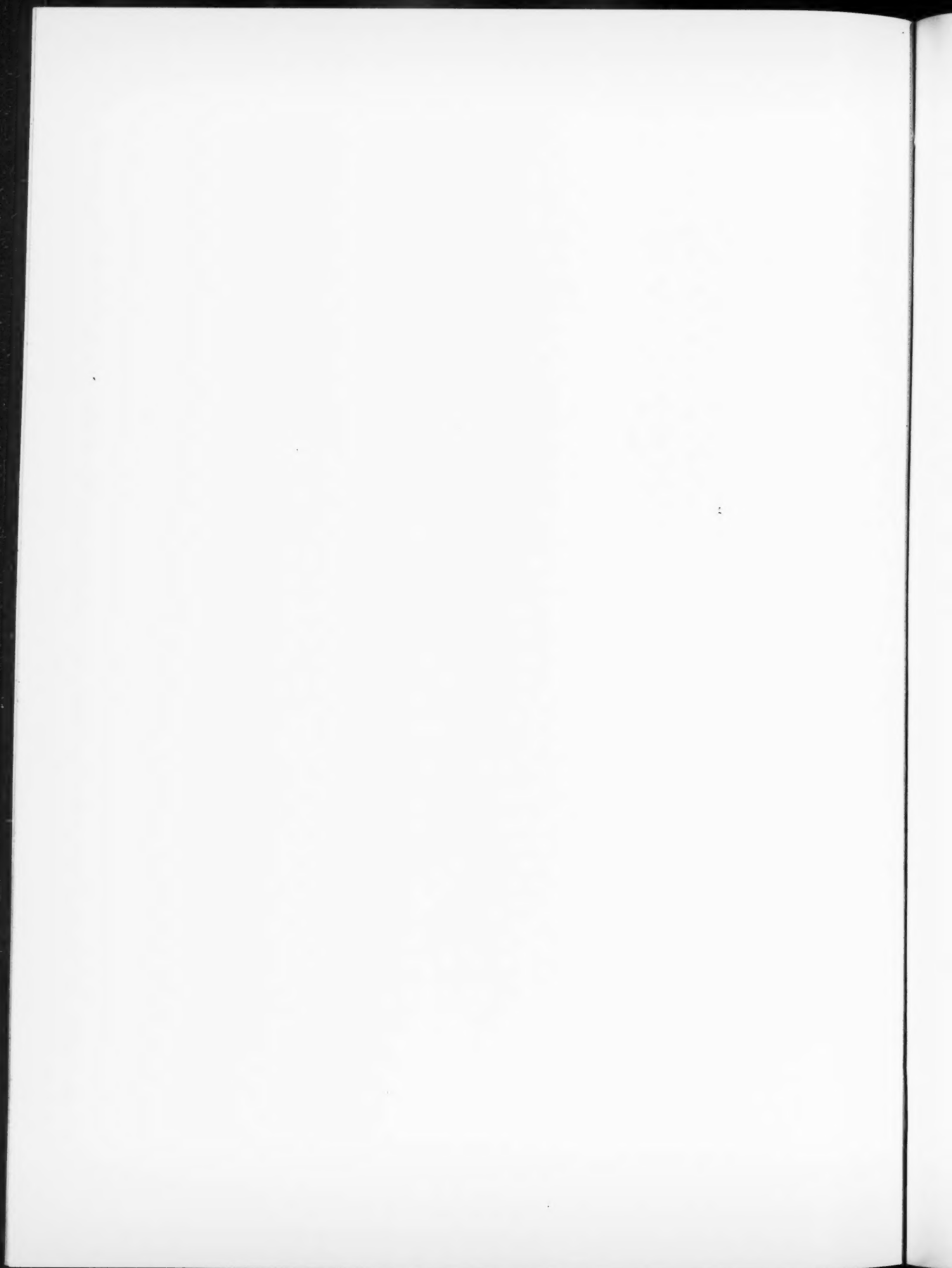




FIG. 5. BENEDETTO DA MAJANO: MARBLE BUST OF PETRUS TALANUS
Collection of Mr. Joseph E. Widener, Philadelphia



differences may be traced in a comparison between Rosellino's masculine busts in marble in the Bargello (Matteo Palmieri), in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Giovanni di San Miniato), and in Berlin (The Young Florentine), with those of Benedetto in the Bargello (Pietro Mellini), in the Duomo of Florence (Busts of Giotto and Squarcialepo), and in the Louvre (Filippo Strozzi)²—works which in their superficial arrangement of half length figures, the heads posed "en face," are absolutely similar.

In the bust of the Mackay Collection the broad, full contours of the face, particularly of the lower part, are characteristic of Benedetto da Majano, as is the well developed chest carried to fuller plastic form than is customary with Rosellino; further the modeling of the face achieved with a few broad strokes which have nothing in common with Rosellino's minute and carefully drawn detail, and finally details such as the free and cursory handling of the eyebrows and hair, and the narrow fur trimming which coincides completely with that on other terra cotta busts by Benedetto—for example the Filippo Strozzi in the Berlin Museum.

For purposes of comparison I am illustrating two more hitherto unpublished portrait busts which seem to me to be the work of Benedetto da Majano—a marble bust from the collection of Mr. Joseph E. Widener which bears the inscription PETRUS TALANUS PRESBITER (Fig. 5) and which may be compared with the bust of Pietro Mellini (Fig. 4) or the busts in the Florentine Duomo; and a beautiful terra cotta bust of a man formerly in the Rehber Collection, Paris, and recently sold to an American collector (Fig. 6), which falls in line admirably with our bust and that of Filippo Strozzi.

As the Bust of a Warrior by Antonio Pollaiuolo has already been published by Dr. Bode,³ and there can be no question as to its attribution, we will turn to the wellknown bust of Lorenzo de Medici (Fig. 7) whose authorship is still in doubt.

This work, while still in Lord Taunton's Collection and later in the Mackay Collection, was attributed to Pollaiuolo, whereas the replica in the Berlin Catalogue bears only the general designation "Florentine School, late XV century." My attribution to Verrochio has lately also been accepted by Dr. Bode.⁴ At the time when this bust passed from

²Reproductions of these works will be found in the excellent monograph on Benedetto da Majano by L. Dussler (Munich, 1923).

³Art in America, 1922.

⁴In the article before mentioned.

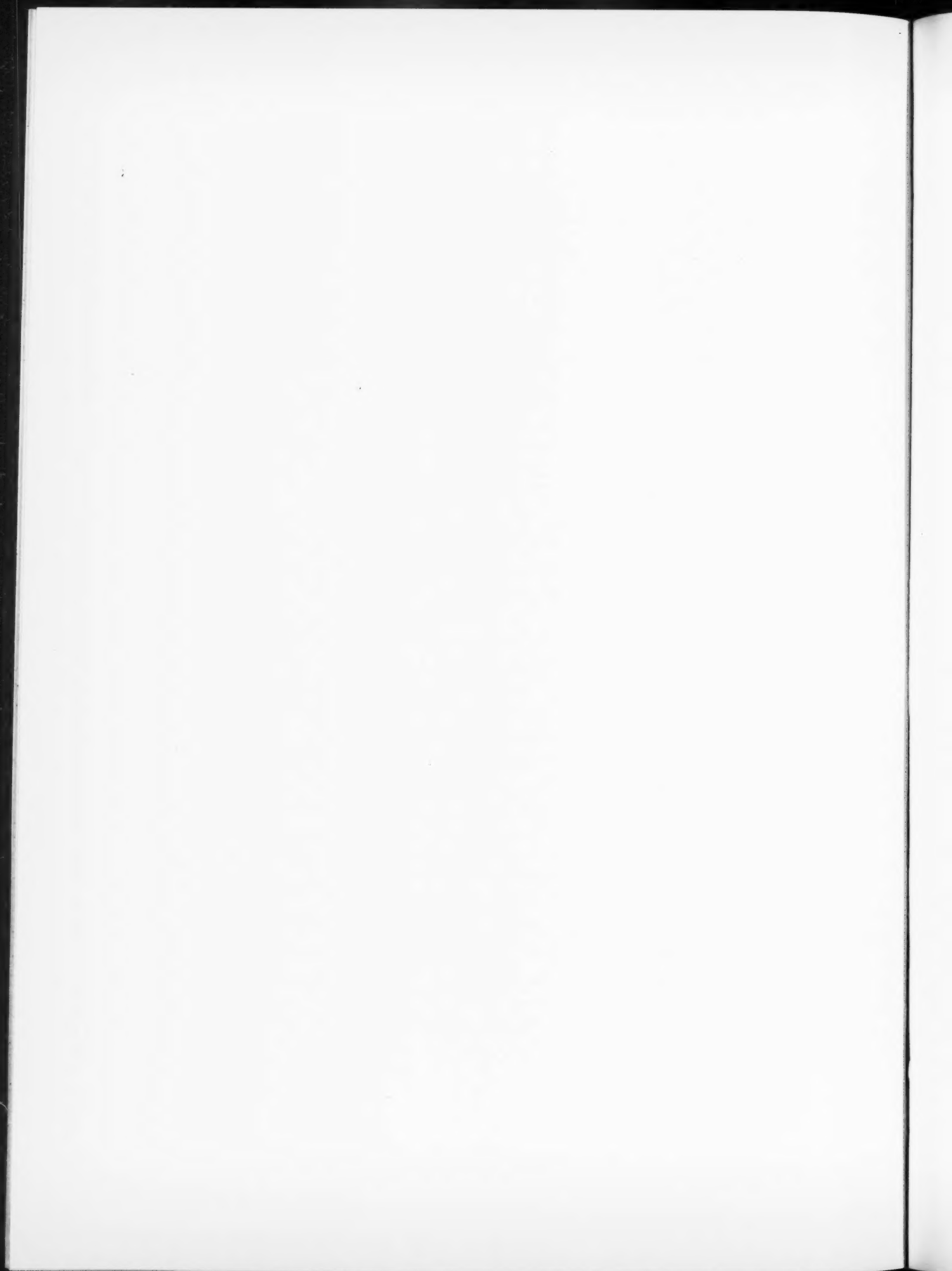
Lord Taunton's possession, Dr. Bode justly remarked in a consideration of the bust that Pollaiuolo moved to Rome in 1464 when Lorenzo was only fifteen years old and that as the bust portrays a mature man, Pollaiuolo must, if it is really his work, have executed it later during some short sojourn in Florence of which we know nothing.

The technique, none the less, shows nothing of Pollaiuolo's restless, fiery contours—of his sharp, violently curved lines—nothing of his strained, repressed emotion—traits readily recognizable in the Bust of the Warrior in the Mackay Collection. The modeling is large and simple, the contrasts of light and shadow developed in broad planes; the expression is quiet, dominant, self-controlled—not explosive as was Pollaiuolo's wont. The contours seem, in fact, almost too regular for Verrochio's baroque outlines, but there are none the less distinct resemblances to this master's last work—the equestrian statue of Colleoni in which he relies more than formerly on powerful mass formation and simple line. The largely formed features, too, are reminiscent of the Colleoni—particularly of the brutal chin and harshly set mouth and the eyes with strongly down drawn brows and slanting lids. The strong contrasts of light and shadow and the deeply hollowed hair are reminiscent of the earlier likeness of Lorenzo by Verrochio in the Boston Museum and its companion piece in the Bargello and correspond in effect to the framing helmet of the Colleoni. The strong contrasts and simplification of line and mass formation were, in the case of the Colleoni statue, purposely exaggerated in view of its lofty placing and its execution in bronze.

It is, however, this late period of Verrochio's career that we must consider if we ascribe the bust to him as he died in 1488 when Lorenzo de Medici was 39. Lorenzo, himself, died a few years later. That this bust was executed, as has been assumed, after Lorenzo's death seems most unlikely in view of the extraordinarily vivid characterization. It would be unfair, however, to dismiss Verrochio's authorship as impossible because his model appears older than 38 or 39, when we realize that Lorenzo could not in any case have been over 43. It is very difficult, too, to estimate exactly the age of a subject, particularly one of such marked characteristics, which tend to add an appearance of years; moreover, we know his features to have been marred at an early age by the disease which eventually proved fatal to him. Quite apart from technique it is in other respects highly probable that Verrochio who stood in close relation to the Medici and had already modeled an



FIG. 6. BENEDETTO DA MAJANO: TERRACOTTA BUST
Formerly Rehber Collection, Paris



earlier portrait of Lorenzo was the author of this bust whose fame is betokened by numerous contemporaneous casts which are in existence.

The marble bust of the Madonna from the Palmieri-Nuti Collection in Siena, attributed to Mino da Fiesole, was as renowned in early days as it is today, and justly so (Fig. 8). In technique and expression it is one of the most enchanting productions of the early Renaissance. The expression is one of veiled mysticism and imbued with spiritual feeling. The features carved with a realistic clearness are endowed with a rare nobility and sweetness and the execution in ivory-tinted marble combines the utmost precision with tenderness and delicacy. That this bust enjoyed great popularity from the time of its creation is proved by the numerous fifteenth century replicas in stucco which exist; a wellknown one in the Louvre, a second listed in the Timball Collection, a third in the Metropolitan Museum, while a fourth lately come to light at an auction in New York. That this might be a portrayal of St. Catherine of Siena was first suggested by an inscription on an eighteenth century engraving which states further that the bust was then in the possession of the Sani family. (*"Effigies Marmora S. Catherinae apud senesem nobilem virum Adrianum de Sanis."*) How little reliance may be placed upon this inscription is proved by its attribution of the bust to Jacopo della Quercia. As a matter of fact it is a portrayal of the Madonna, not of St. Catherine, as is proved by the still visible fragments of an inscription on the pedestal—*"Ave Maria gratia Plena."* However, the tradition of obviously later origin that the portrait represented St. Catherine has taken such firm root that it reappeared even in recent times. P. Schubring believes it possible that the inscription mentioned above was added later, possibly replacing the name of the Siennese saint. This surmise, however, is contradicted by the ancient coloring of the inscription which is painted with the same technique and in the same colour as the eyeballs which undoubtedly were the work of the artist himself.

Lenoir states in a "Journal relating to St. Catherine of Siena" that when he saw the bust in 1882 in the family of the Conte Palmieri-Nuti the pupils of the eyes still retained their dark coloring. On the occasion of a later visit they had become much paler—which he thinks perhaps might be explained by the bust having been cleaned. Later, in 1904, the bust was exhibited at the Mostra d'Arte Antica in Siena and has since then frequently been written of.

Dr. Bode ascribes this piece to Mino from which attribution he cannot be shaken despite contrary opinion. Corrado Ricci coincides with him, while Mason Perkins (*Burlington Magazine*, 1904) suggests a Sienese origin, naming Nerroccio, with the remark that Berenson may have been the first to suggest this authorship. Paul Schubring in his "*Plastik Siena's im Quattrocento* (1907)" suggests a new attribution at some length, assigning the bust to another Sienese artist, Giovanni di Stefano, an attribution which he again maintains in his "*Italienische Plastik des Quattrocento*, 1923." In opposition to this A. Venturi (*Storia della Arte Italiana*, VI. p. 666) believes it to be the work of a "follower of Mino" with Sienese affiliations.

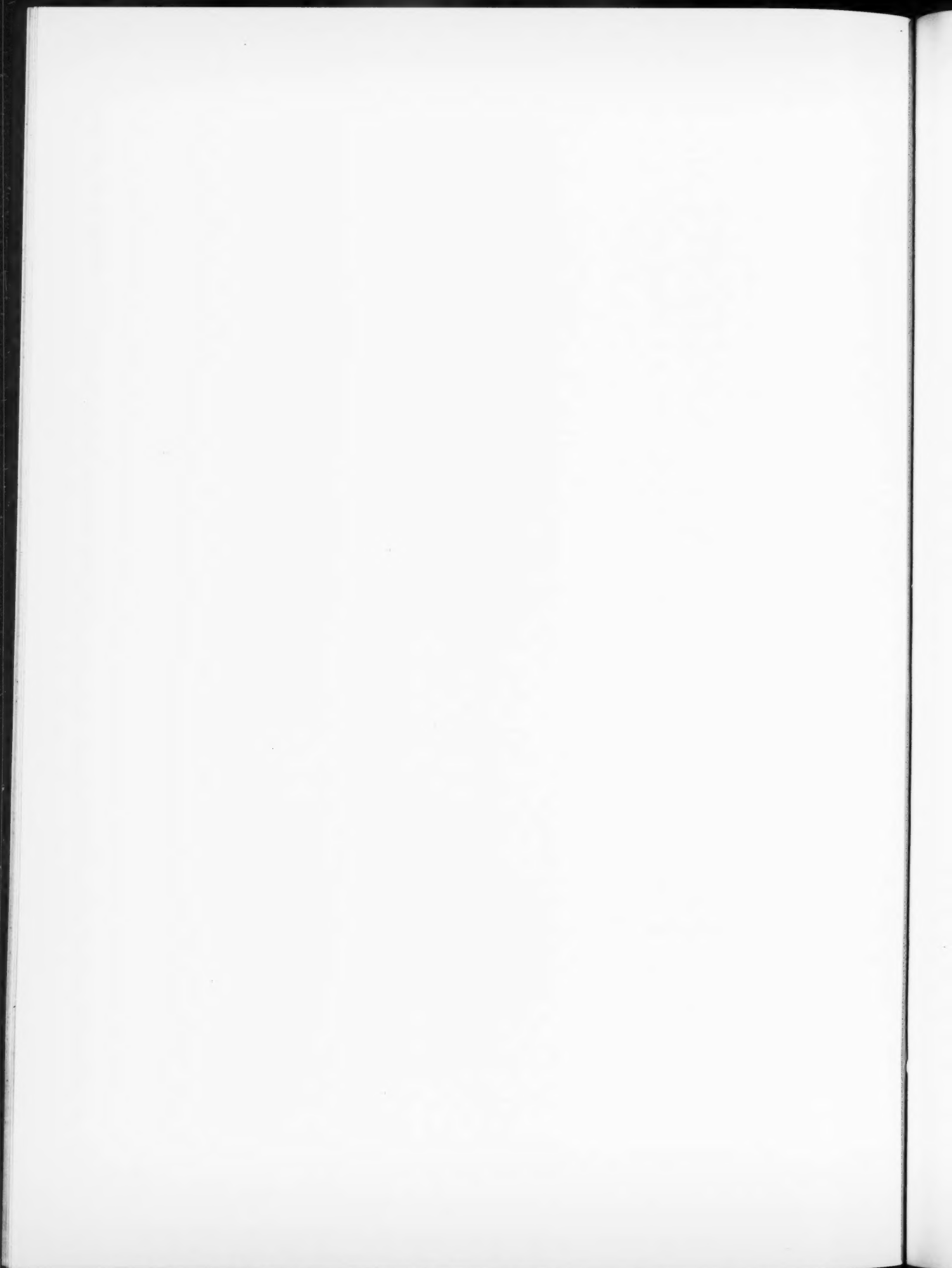
Schubring goes into the question most deeply. Quite justly he emphasizes the similarity to the Sienese school, particularly as regards the dreamy expression which is alien to Florentine art. I am, however, unable to agree with him in his further exposition where he finds relationships to the work of Giovanni di Stefano. I can see in the Mackay bust none of the characteristics of the known works of this master, such as the Tabernacle in the cathedral of Siena, the St. Ansanus, and the two bronze angels in the same place — at least nothing more than the general resemblances existing between works of the same school. The plump cheeked, sheerly naturalistic and simply conceived figures of Giovanni di Stefano have nothing in common with the spirituality and delicate execution of the bust. Certainly as regards his marbles there is nothing in his work of the inspiration and rarely finished technique that the creator of the Palmieri-Nuti bust displays.

Schubring most fittingly characterizes Giovanni di Stefano's bronze angels when he speaks of their bodily strength and soundness; their freedom of movement and energy of expression, and then goes on to say — "Something of Florentine health and sanity rests on these Heavenly Messengers, who certainly lack the aristocratic quality of Francesco di Giorgio's, but are sturdy, vigorous and conceived with plastic feeling. They stand in relation to Francesco di Giorgio's angels somewhat as the Peasant Crucifixion of Donatello stands to the 'delicatissimo' of Brunelleschi's." How is it possible to attribute the spiritual, æthereal Madonna Bust of the Mackay Collection to an artist thus characterized? Opposed to this we have the spiritual quality of Nerroccio's work which this sculpture closely resembles. To confirm this view a comparison should be made with his paintings and some of his less known sculptures rather than with his two most famous female statues



FIG. 7. VEROCCHIO: BUST OF LORENZO MEDICI. (DETAIL)
Painted Terracotta

Collection of Mr. Clarence H. Mackay, Roslyn, N. Y.



—the wooden statue of St. Catherine of Siena in the Oratorio in Fontebranda, and the marble figure of St. Catherine of Alexandria in the cathedral of Siena. For this purpose I am here illustrating the beautiful Madonna from the Philip Lehman Collection, New York (Fig. 9), and a most fascinating statue in wood of the Madonna now in the Hof Museum, Vienna (Fig. 10), which seems to me to be without doubt an authentic work by this master. Also a relief of the Madonna by Nerroccio of which there are several stucco replicas, for instance, in the Ryerson Collection in the Chicago Museum and in the Berlin Museum (where it is designated as from the workshop of Nerroccio and Francesco di Giorgio) may well be compared with the marble bust in the Mackay Collection. Regarding the Vienna statue which while still on the market was called a work of the fourteenth century and connected with Simone Martini in a curious fashion we need only recall some of his more famous altarpieces such as the Madonna between St. George and St. Bernardino in the Academy at Siena to find again the same type, the same expression and the same arrangement of the garments. The cloak lies across the brow in similar fashion, falls over the arm exposing the long hands with pointed fingers, and disposes itself on the ground in curious curling waves. The pleated undergarment is caught at neck and girdle by horizontal bands. Characteristic above all is the melancholy type of the Madonna with her narrow eyes, long pointed nose and small, curved mouth, in vivid contrast to the happy, animated Christ Child. The shy, delicate and slenderly built Madonna of the wooden statue has about her a touching humanity—a dreamy and visionary quality that one can only associate with the art of Siena in the days of Nerroccio.

There is much in the Madonna of the Mackay Collection that is reminiscent in type of the wooden statue—the sloping shoulders, the long oval of the face, the pointed nose. The arrangement of the head-dress is similar, although in the wooden statue the curves framing the face are formed by waves of hair. In other respects, however, there are divergencies. These may be partly attributed to the use of another medium, but they also suggest a different technical approach. The marble figure is more rigid in type; the eyes more precisely modeled, the structure more definitely accented. So balanced a conformation of the individual features is not to be found even in Nerroccio's marble of St. Catherine in the cathedral at Siena. These elements, suggestive of Florence, and particularly of Mino, no doubt influenced so eminent an

authority on Italian sculpture as Dr. Bode in his attribution to this artist—the more so as numerous details (which evidently also influenced Venturi in his attribution to “A Sienese follower of Mino”) seem to bear out this contention.

Though Schubring affirms the slanted pose of the head to be un-Florentine, the arrangement of the drapery less formal than is Mino's wont and the pedestal termination not found in his work, these objections do not seem apposite to me. In fact, the accentuation of the head, carved in three-quarter relief, while the body sinks backward in lower relief, and the diagonal arrangement of line are particularly characteristic of Mino. The fact that the head is inclined slightly to one side is not important to the composition, moreover there exist in Florentine sculpture other examples of this pose. The determining factor is the stiff, diagonal direction which the artist has lent to his composition, achieving a certain balance in line toward the other side through the lines of the garments flowing towards a blunt angle. These diagonal lines broken by a blunt angle dominate nearly all of Mino's work (recollect the monument to Hugo von Andersburg in the Badia, Florence) and our artist has undoubtedly adopted them from him. The same thing is true of the parallel lines of drapery which appear in the Mackay bust, in the folds at the breast, in the sleeves and in the veil, and in numerous other works by Mino. These curved folds appear frequently in Mino's Madonna in the loose garment covering the middle portion of the body. In our bust the applied portions of the garments as well as the sharply ridged drapery are reminiscent of Mino's style. He also was wont to terminate his bust by an angular pedestal which sometimes ran halfway around and over which parts of the garments were disposed in horizontal lines. Our bust corresponds strikingly in this particular with the male bust by Mino from the Dreyfus Collection, now in the Louvre, and with the bust of a girl in the Berlin Museum. This preference for a pedestal terminating halfway round is exhibited, for example, in the wall altar at Fiesole, and the termination of the relief in the former E. Gavet Collection of Paris (illustrated in the Catalogue of 1894) and of the Bust of a Boy in the Altman Collection in the Metropolitan Museum, of New York, coincide completely with the pedestal of the Mackay bust.

I can also affirm that the technique is strikingly reminiscent of Mino, as I had the opportunity of closely comparing the Madonna bust of the Mackay Collection with another female bust of Mino's.



FIG. 8. MARBLE BUST OF THE MADONNA. (DETAIL)
Collection of Mr. Clarence H. Mackay, Roslyn, N. Y.

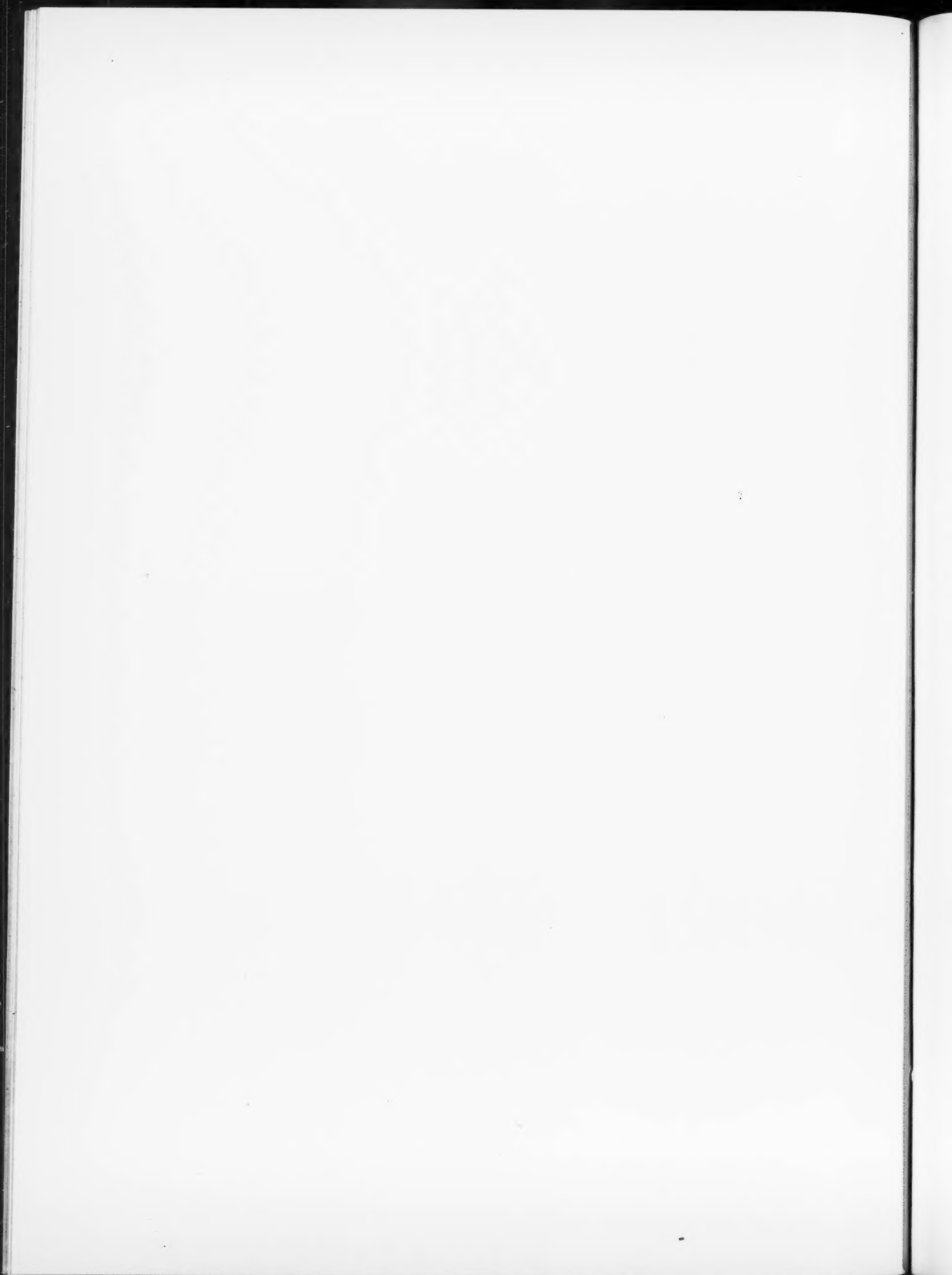


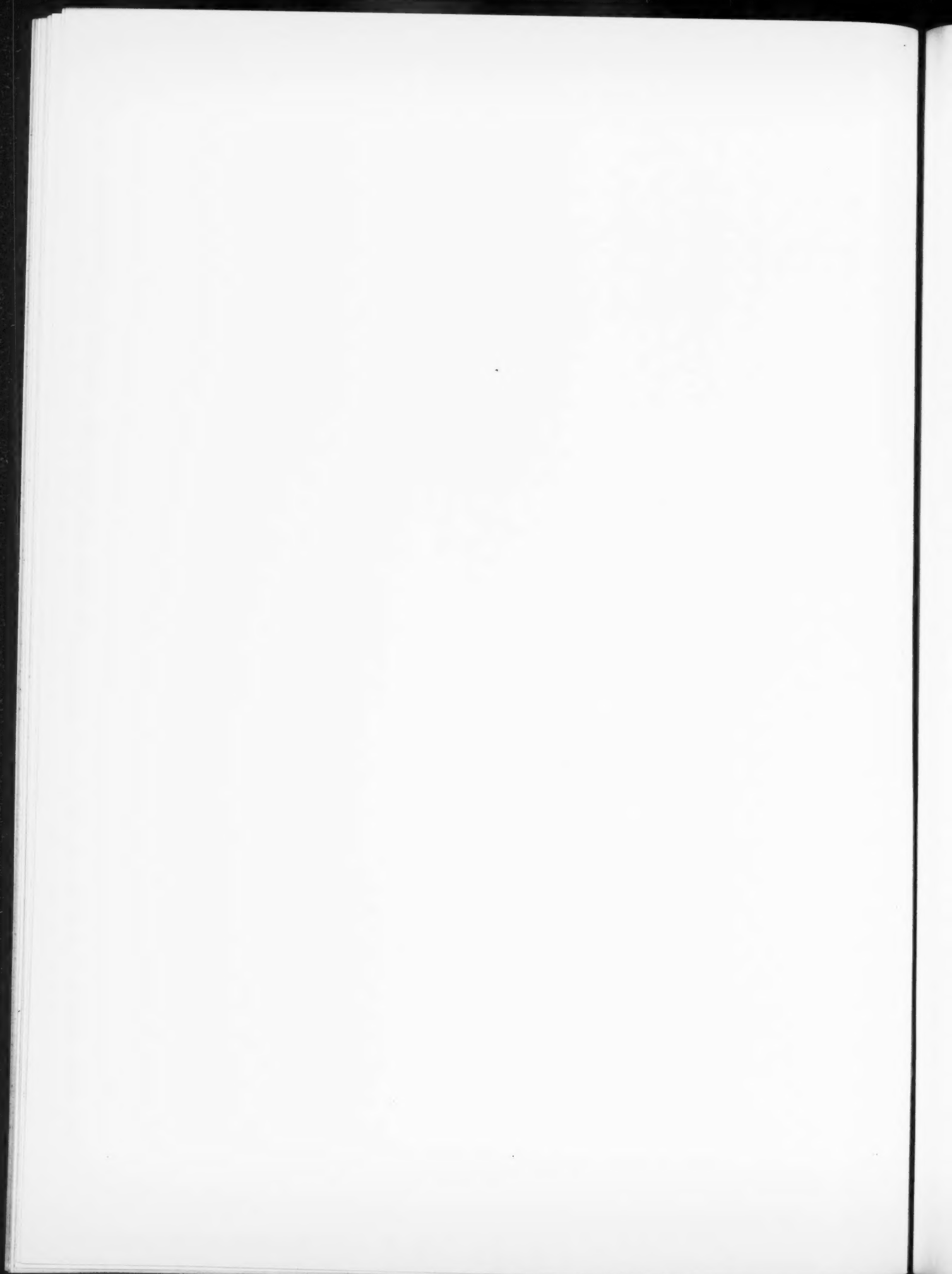


FIG. 9. NERROCCIO: MADONNA AND SAINTS
Collection of Mr. Philip Lehman, New York





FIG. 10. NERROCCIO: MADONNA AND CHILD
Woodcarving
Museum, Vienna



The carving of the eyes, with the sharp division of the eyelids from the socket, the clear curves connecting the eyesockets with the nose, the summarily indicated eyebrows, the arrangement of the draperies coincided completely in both works—even if the two artists differed in other particulars. Bode and Venturi, therefore, seem absolutely justified when they point to resemblances with Mino's work. Why, however, should Nerroccio, who to me seems indubitably to be the author of this work, not have felt the influence of Mino who was his contemporary in a neighbouring town? What is more probable than that Nerroccio, who was not by nature a worker in marble, as was Mino, took council with this famous marble technician of Florence and studied his work? It is possible that this dreamy bust was Nerroccio's first marble. We know of only one other work in marble by him—the statue of St. Catherine in the Cathedral of Siena, which represents a far more advanced stage of his career and consequently no longer betrays an alien influence.

H. A. Valentiner

DETROIT, MICH.

THE FERRETS AND THE POISSONNIERS

IN 1474 Jean Rolin, Archdeacon at Beaune, ordered from the painter Pierre Spicre "les patrons des histoires de Notre Dame, à executer à la dètrempe et destinés à être traduits en tapisserie." There were to be twenty-one episodes. Seventeen of these scenes in tapestry are in the Church of Notre Dame in Beaune today. One of them bears the date 1502 and it has been assumed that the confusion incident to the wars of Charles the Bold delayed the weaving the better part of thirty years.

The document establishing these facts was first published by Henri Chabeuf in 1900.¹ Since that time every inclusive book on the tapestry of this period has referred to this set.² The concensus of opinion has been that the pieces were woven in Touraine. But curiously enough no one of the authors discussing the Beaune Life of the Virgin has attempted to make further attributions to the painter Pierre Spicre on the basis of this established work of his hand. Pierre Spicre has remained a name unconnected with any other tapestry design.

Obvious stylistic similarities, however, point to him as the designer of two other important and well known pieces, the antependium formerly in the Church at Hinnenburg and now in the Prenzlau Museum;³ and another antependium with Pieta and Saints Michael and Stephen in the Cathedral of Sens.⁴

In 1498 Joas , the last name being indecipherable, a tapestry weaver of Audenarde, ordered from Pierre Ferret two cartoons illustrating scenes from the History of Hercules.⁵ The tapestries from these cartoons have never been even tentatively identified nor is any other contemporary work from Audenarde certainly known to give a clue to the identification. But there was in an anonymous Druot sale on February 13, 1913, a fragment from a History of Hercules of about this period which did not exactly correspond in style with any established type, and in the Heilbronner Sale at Hotel Druot, November 9-12, 1921, another, smaller, fragment of the same tapestry, with two of the figures shifted in position, appeared. Without any evidence whatever, as a mere speculative hypothesis, it was assumed that these might be remnants of the Ferret Hercules.⁶

¹Rèvue de l'Art Chrétien 1900, p. 193; Les Tapisseries de l'Eglise de Notre Dame de Beaune.

²Guiffrey, Les Tapisseries du XIIe à XVIe Siècle, p. 84; Migeon, Les Arts de Tissu, p. 284; Kurth, Gotische Bildteppiche aus Frankreich und Flandern, p. 10.

³Schmitz, Bildteppiche, p. 270.

⁴Demotte, Les Tapisseries Gothique, Nos. 59, 60.

⁵Göbel, Wandteppiche I, 1, p. 468.

⁶In the author's private notes.

Pierre Ferret had a son Anthonne who was also his pupil and who evidently followed the same profession of tapestry designer, for when Arnold Poissonier died in 1522 he owed him 37 sous, the balance of a sum due on some *patrons*.⁷ No design has ever been attributed to Anthonne and no work of the Poissonnier shops has been definitely identified.

But there is a large fragment of a tapestry, formerly in the collection of Mrs. Rita Lydig, illustrating the Portuguese in India (Fig. 1). We know from the inventory made on the death of Arnold Poissonier⁸ that a set illustrating this theme was in his shop and probably the "histoire de gens et bestes sauvages à la manière de Calcut" which he sold twelve years earlier to Robert de Wicfel was another rendition of the same thing. On the basis of those facts, however, this piece could not be conclusively assigned to the Poissonier shops for Arnold was apparently a merchant who disposed of other people's work as well as his own and the set under the description "à la manière de Portugal et de Indie" appears also in the records of the Grenier shops.⁹

That, however, the New York piece was woven in the Poissonier shops is proven by a signature on a hem of a garment, MOEALX. The only Meaux in the Tournai tapestry records at the time is Meaux Poissonier who appears under this name in 1528 and under the Flemish form of the name de Viscre in 1505 and 1512,¹⁰ though curiously enough neither Soil in recording these facts nor Dr. Göbel in repeating them has realised that de Viscre and Poissonier are one and the same person.¹¹ There are moreover three pieces of this same series in a slightly later rendition in the collection of the Marquis de Dreux Brezé¹² and at least once and perhaps twice, on the hilt of a scabbard and probably on one of the battle flags, the signature Meaux occurs on these also.

Furthermore on one of the Dreux Brezé pieces there is a large capital A. De Farcy in writing of this set assumes that this is the initial of one of the captains of the expedition but this is improbable for the two names generally associated with the expedition were those of the two Da Gamas and if anyone of the company were to be celebrated it would almost certainly be one of them. More probably the initial refers to the designer, and it seemed justifiable to assume that it might be the

⁷Soil, *Les Tapisseries de Tournai*, p. 210.

⁸Soil, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

⁹Soil, *op. cit.* p. 316.

¹⁰Soil, *op. cit.* p. 337, 331.

¹¹Göbel, *op. cit.* p. 257, 260.

¹²*Tapisseries Tournaisiennes de 1502-1504*, in *Les Arts Anciens de Flandre*, T. VI, p. 107.

initial of Anthonne who, we know, did paint cartoons for the Poissoniers.

Again the attribution was speculative but hypothetically useful for this designer "A" was clearly from stylistic evidence the author of several other tapestries including a Battle of the Titans and the Gods, in a New York commercial collection; two pieces from a history of Moses now on anonymous loan at the Metropolitan Museum and the piece with two scenes from the History of Judith and Holofernes in the Cinquantenaire Museum (Fig. 2). The first subject appears in the Tournai records as "Histoire de Grise" and a set of this subject was in the studio of Lucq Carlier when he died in 1542.¹³ The History of Moses does not appear in the Tournai records but a History of Judith and Holofernes was sold by Arnold Poissonier in 1513 to the Duke of Suffolk and again in 1516 to the Governor General of Tournai for Henry VIII, Monseigneur de Montjoie.¹⁴ Three sets, moreover, were left in his estate. That this is an example of the Poissonier Judith is proven by the pied signature on the edge of the skirt of one of the pages, EN S ER, Hermes, another member of the family who appears in 1500, and 1519 and as de Viscre in 1512.¹⁵

With a little further study it became evident that the two hypothetical attributions, that of the Hercules fragments to Pierre Ferret and of this group to his son Anthonne, re-enforced each other perfectly. For while the style differed, as the work of two people must differ, there was an intimate resemblance especially in minor revealing tricks of drawing, the derivative relation that might be expected between father and son who were also teacher and pupil.

But the fabric of theory was at this point shaken. For a little more study disclosed the disconcerting fact that two pieces with scenes from the Life of Christ in the Hoentschel Collection were of necessity by the same painter as the two Hercules fragments; and at the same time the Hoentschel pieces were by the same designer as the Life of the Virgin of Beaune, that is Pierre Spicre. The Ferret family seemed quite ruled out.

The Ferret family was ruled out unless Pierre Ferret and Pierre Spicre were one and the same person in two different languages. In modern French *Ferret* means an instrument used in making glass and one used in lace making. In modern Flemish *Spijker* means a nail. The

¹³Soil, op. cit. p. 49.

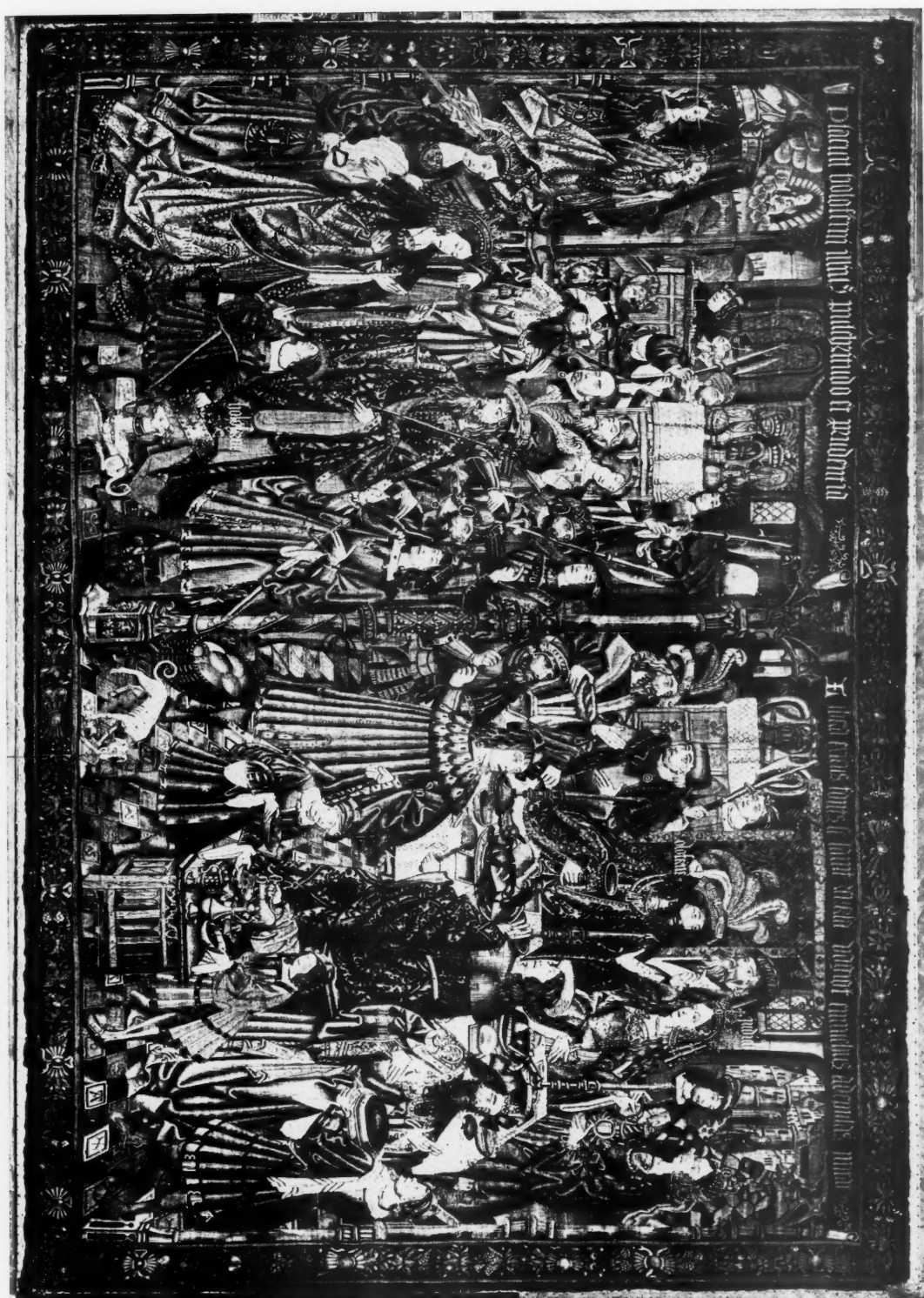
¹⁴Op. cit. p. 257, 264, 281.

¹⁵Op. cit. p. 337, 331.

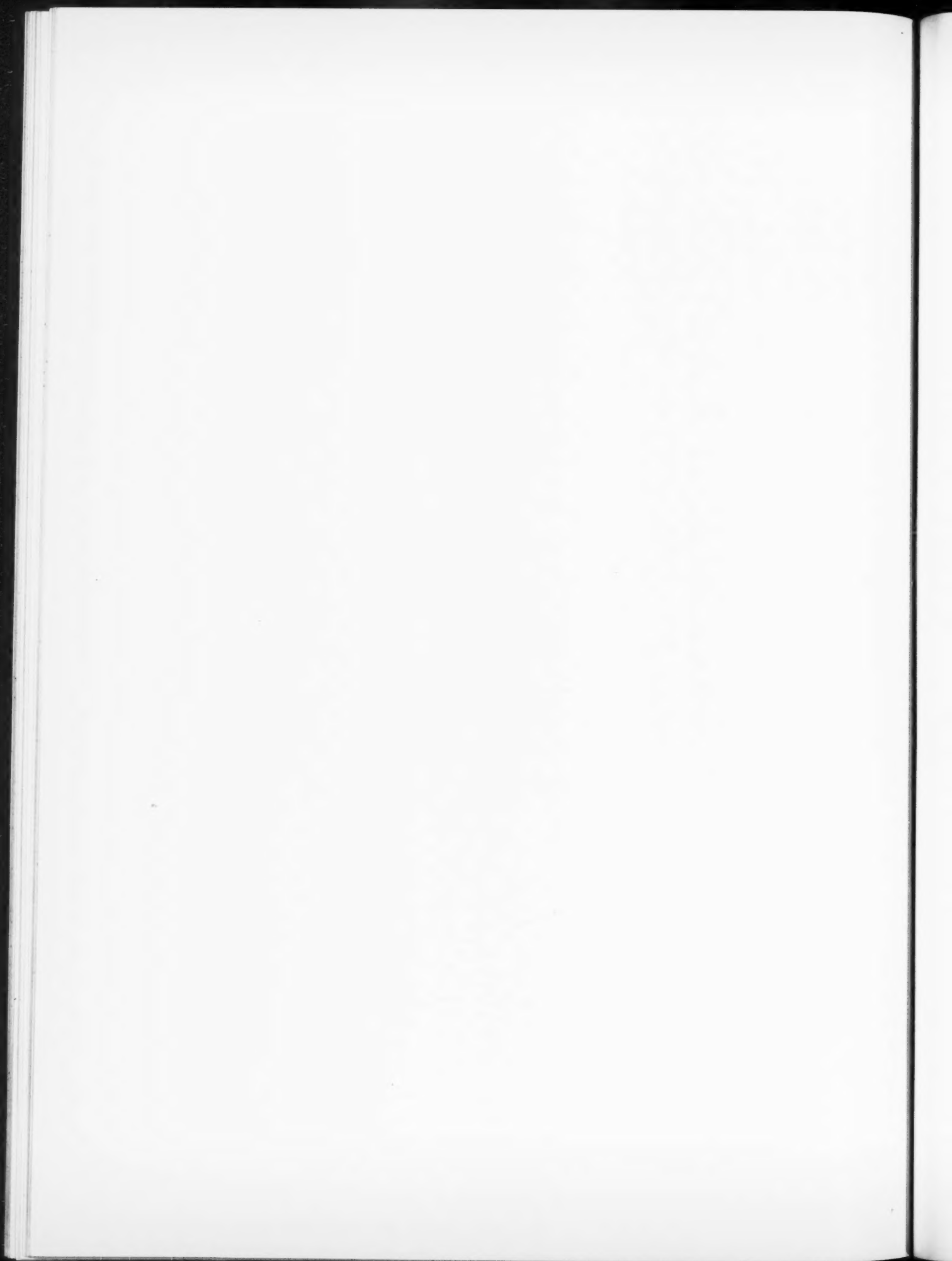


The Portuguese in India
Woven in the shop of Meaux Poissonier of Tournai about 1525 after a cartoon by Anthoine Ferret
Formerly in the collection of Mrs. Rita Lydie, New York

TWO SCENES FROM THE HISTORY OF JUPITER AND HIOPEENES
Woven in the shop of Hermes Poissonier about 1525, after a cartoon by Anthoine Ferret



TWO SCENES FROM THE HISTORY OF JUDITH AND HOLOFERNES
 Woven in the shop of Hieronymus Palszouder about 1525, after a cartoon by Antoine Ferret



only similarity lay in the fact that both were made of iron and were somewhat similar in shape. Pursuing this clue it in the end appeared that at the beginning of the Sixteenth Century each meant in the respective languages, tack. Pierre Spicre was Pierre Ferret and in modern English would be called Mr. Peter Tack. The Hercules was by Pierre Ferret-Spicre and is almost certainly the Hercules referred to in the document. And by deduction the group of tapestries by Master "A" were really by his son Anthonne.

But Pierre had another son also, Jean, who was likewise his pupil but of whom nothing whatever else is known.¹⁶ There is however in the Cluny Museum an Augustus and the Sibyl in tapestry very close to the work of both Pierre and Anthonne Ferret but somewhat different. It is signed on the hem of Augustus' robe Joannis. On the basis of this signature Thierry¹⁷ assigned it to Jean de Roome but there is no relation whatever. This must be after cartoons by Jean Ferret. Evidently by the same hand are the cartoons for the set of Chaste Suzanne.¹⁸ In the fifth piece of the series occurs the inscription Joani. This set also was woven by Hermes Poissonier whose signature in full appears in separate letters on the tiles of the fourth piece. To him can be attributed also the History of John the Baptist one piece of which was formerly in Chateau Nijenrode and two others of which are in private possession in France;¹⁹ the Prodigal Son in the Cluny Museum and a very interesting piece illustrating Alain Chartier's L'Esperance in the collection of Frank Gair Macomber.

Thus designs by all three members of the Ferret family have now been identified and on this basis a number of other tapestries can be assigned to them or their studio; the work of two members of the Poissonier family has been identified beyond question and the work of Joas . . . of Audenarde is identified with a high degree of probability. The last point, moreover, becomes of especial importance in a second chain of evidence leading to equally important conclusions.

Phyllis Asherman

SAN MATEO, CALIF.

¹⁶Thieme-Becker, *Kunstler Lexikon*, vol. 11, p. 245 f.

¹⁷Thiery, *Les Tapisseries historées signées par Jean van Room*. Appendice p. 11 and pl. D. The piece in the Cluny seems on examination to be a very late copy, probably Nineteenth Century, of the Sixteenth Century original which has apparently been lost.

¹⁸Guiffrey, *La Tapisserie de la Chaste Suzanne*.

¹⁹Demotte, *op. cit.* Nos. 64, 65.

FRANK DUVENECK'S ETCHINGS

THE Cincinnati Museum owns what probably is a complete set and the only complete set of Duveneck's etchings, but the small group in the Print Room of the New York Public Library should suffice to whet the taste of the genuine lover of etchings for Duveneck's remarkable work in this kind. He who prefers Elizabethan to Victorian English, dry sherry to sweet, Maine to Florida, will have no difficulty in discerning the tonic quality in these splendid plates, especially if he should see them in the rough impressions pulled by the artist himself. Crude as these are they say something that is not quite said by the excellent impressions made later by a professional printer — or it may have been an amateur printer; in any case it was someone who knew much more about handling a press than Duveneck did, and who had a better press.

It was about 1880 that Duveneck, upon his second visit to Italy, began to concern himself with etching. The story of the proofs sent by one of his friends, without his knowledge, to the first exhibition of the new Society of Painter Etchers in London, and there mistaken for Whistler's work, has too often been told to be told again.

Mr. Pennell in his book on Whistler finds it "incredible that two etchers like Haden and Legros could have mistaken the work of Duveneck for that of Whistler" and all attentive observers will agree with him. The differences in handling are obvious enough, but only an etcher can explain them properly in terms of the etcher's technique. The differences in feeling no doubt will display themselves variously to different temperaments. To me Duveneck's Venice is unlike any other Venice known to art. Duveneck's Venice is harsh and brilliant and active, a city that communicates the joy of physical life and power as though these never had failed and faded with her thousand years of struggle for existence; a city with strangely little of the delicate fascination found there by Whistler and caught in the fine mesh of his sensitive art; with, instead, a vigorous, almost boisterous energy astonishingly linked to idleness and languor.

Much of the energy is in the architecture, leaving the languor to the human creatures strolling through the compositions. In the rugged notation of weatherworn palaces, animate with the flame of life kindled by the Renaissance and still gloriously burning; in the bridges expressing force in stone; in the strong line of the boats, powerful in repose, there is no hint of that decline which caused Ruskin to see his Venice as "a ghost upon the sands of the sea, so weak, so quiet, so bereft of all

but her loveliness, that we might well doubt as we watched her faint reflection in the mirage of the lagoon, which was the City and which the Shadow."

Duveneck, of course, was far too much an artist to mix symbolism and history with his art. If he gave a thought to the great past of the city it was a thought that certainly had no influence upon his grapple with metal plate and etching needle. But he brought to his interpretation of the interesting scene before him a habit of mind that evoked the hardy spirit of the once famous maritime port, theatre of violent political and commercial struggles, and home of a militant and once physically powerful race. He saw Venice hale and muscular beneath her rose-colored veil, and in his etchings we see her thus. He borrowed from none, and if his composition often lacks the lovely perfection of Whistler's it is organic, and is exhilaratingly his own.

Although his line is bold and synthetic, suggesting more than is told, his arrangements show less economy, and not infrequently the plate is crowded although never to confusion. "The Rialto" is a plate filled with significance. Almost no sky, the great stone bridge of Da Ponte rising abruptly, its harsh upper angle dominating the slow curve of the lower arch, broad steps leading up to the span, narrow steps leading down to the water, sailboats and gondolas, pedestrians on the bridge and on the bank and climbing the steps, iron gates, stone balustrades, an impression of strong color and of practical life. Everything but rhythm. For this one turns to Whistler's "Rialto" with its rising tide of figures pouring over the steps of the bridge, its amazing suggestion of continuously flowing movement lapping the streets and stairways as the waters of the canal lap ceaselessly above their stratum of clay.

It is in the buildings and in the boats rather than in the people that Duveneck chiefly displays his power of discerning and revealing character. The boats are personalities, especially the sailing boats for which a particular appreciation is shown. Look where you will for a livelier delicacy of line in sails and ropes, for a more buoyant proportion in masts and yards, a truer structural curve in the body of these sturdy boats of commerce, more interesting in the Duveneck picture than the beaked and canopied gondolas.

Occasionally the people are personalities, nearly all of them in the tall "Riva" and the long "Riva" where they make vivid little groups of tourists, hucksters, gondoliers, with here and there a single figure, a boy running, an old man pausing to scan a newspaper page. In the "Grand

Canal from the Rialto" an old man smoking a pipe in the foreground is something. Other figures except as they fit into the composition, which doubtless was all for which they were intended, hardly count as elements of interest.

The buildings invariably count, not only as parts of the composition but in their individual design, their solidity and lightness, their vivid irregularity of feature, their quality of exuberant mobile audacity. There is nowhere any lapse from the impression of masculine force, although in certain details, in the ironwork of the doorways and window grills for example, Whistler's Venetian etchings show more vigor of line.

After many visits to the meagre portfolio in the New York library Duveneck's version of the Venetian scene has defined itself for me as that from which one most richly infers a city built by people of tenacious will, resolute temper, and the animation and resource of healthy minds. And as art it is unique as all great art must be, not really comparable with any other except in the play of differences that reveal its deep individuality.

John Ruther Cary

NEW YORK

A DRAWING BY VAN ORLEY FOR THE CRUCIFIXION TAPESTRY IN THE WIDENER COLLECTION

THE art of tapestry weaving reached its zenith in the fifteenth and early part of the sixteenth centuries. Very few preliminary designs dating from this period are known to us, yet with the help of these few drawings we are able to form a clear idea of the division of the workmanship at this early period between the artist who made the design and the weavers who carried it out.

The first sketch seems usually to have been made by a well-known painter, who often also executed the cartoon. This cartoon, however, was subsequently used in a very free manner by the weavers who frequently added the color scheme and changed details in the design. Although it is difficult to generalize, owing to our still limited knowledge regarding the preliminary stages of the manufacture of these early tapestries, it seems as though the further we go back from the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries, the more we find the weavers using their own judgment for the color composition. From this we may conclude that the designers of these tapestries gave no very elaborate directions in this regard.

Dating from the periods after the middle of the sixteenth century there exist several completely executed paintings of large size made as models for tapestry weavers. For instance, a little known series by a Flemish artist in the Stuttgart museum. As regards the seventeenth century, we need only recall the names of Rubens, Van Dyck and Jordaens, whose large paintings designed for tapestries, and giving the complete color scheme, are still in existence.

On the other hand, in the fifteenth century art of France and Flanders we know several instances where the tapestry weaver used the same design repeatedly, but with a complete change of color arrangement.

Van Orley, too, a true follower of the Florentine and Roman Renaissance artists with their strong inclination to plastic forms and rather colorless drawing, was, as a designer of tapestries, decidedly more interested in the black and white composition than in the color scheme. If, as has been justly stated, his tapestries display his art to better advantage than his paintings, it is precisely because to his design the weavers, especially of the Pannemaker Workshop, added their own rare and brilliant color scheme.

Among the known designs for tapestries of the Van Orley period are the drawings by him in the Louvre for the tapestries representing the Hunts of Maximilian and the drawings by his pupil, Pieter Cook van Alost, in the Albertina for the tapestries in the Detroit Museum. To these may be added a rather large and hitherto unpublished pen drawing by Van Orley in the Stuttgart Print Room (Fig. 1) which is a preliminary study for the composition of the Crucifixion tapestry in the Widener Collection (Fig. 2). Dr. Phyllis Ackerman says in her interesting article on Van Orley as a designer of tapestries in "Art in America," Dec., 1924 — "Any documented piece entirely of Bernard's design becomes of greatest value as a test example of further analysis. But of such documented attributions there are only two for Bernard — the Hunts of Maximilian and the Lamentation over the Body of Christ in the Widener Collection." Since the Stuttgart drawing has become known, we may also call the series to which the Widener tapestry belongs documented pieces. We know enough drawings by Van Orley to make it certain, by comparison, that this drawing is his. Moreover, it is signed with his name in a very early inscription in the left hand corner. On account of very obvious stylistic reasons derived from Van Orley's numerous paintings, the set to which Mr. Widener's tapestry belongs had already been attributed to the artist by Dr. Friedländer¹ and by myself² with more certainty than Dr. Ackerman seemed to think warranted according to her more sceptical point of view, which in other regards has been quite justified.

There already existed documentary evidence regarding these tapestries depicting the Passion. The Vice Regent, Margaretha, aunt of Charles V, ordered from the factory of Peter Pannemaker in 1520 two scenes from the Passion. As Van Orley was present when the contract was drawn up it is more than probable that he was responsible for the production of the cartoon, especially as he was court painter at Brussels at the time. This set is most likely the one which is still preserved in the Spanish State Collection, while the second set with a different border, at one time owned by the Duke of Alba and now in Mr. Widener's and Mr. Lehman's Collections, must have been executed very soon afterwards, probably also in the Pannemaker Workshop as its execution is of the same superb quality.

H. A. Valentiner

¹Jahrbuch der Preuss. Kunstsammlungen, 1909.

²Art in America, 1914.

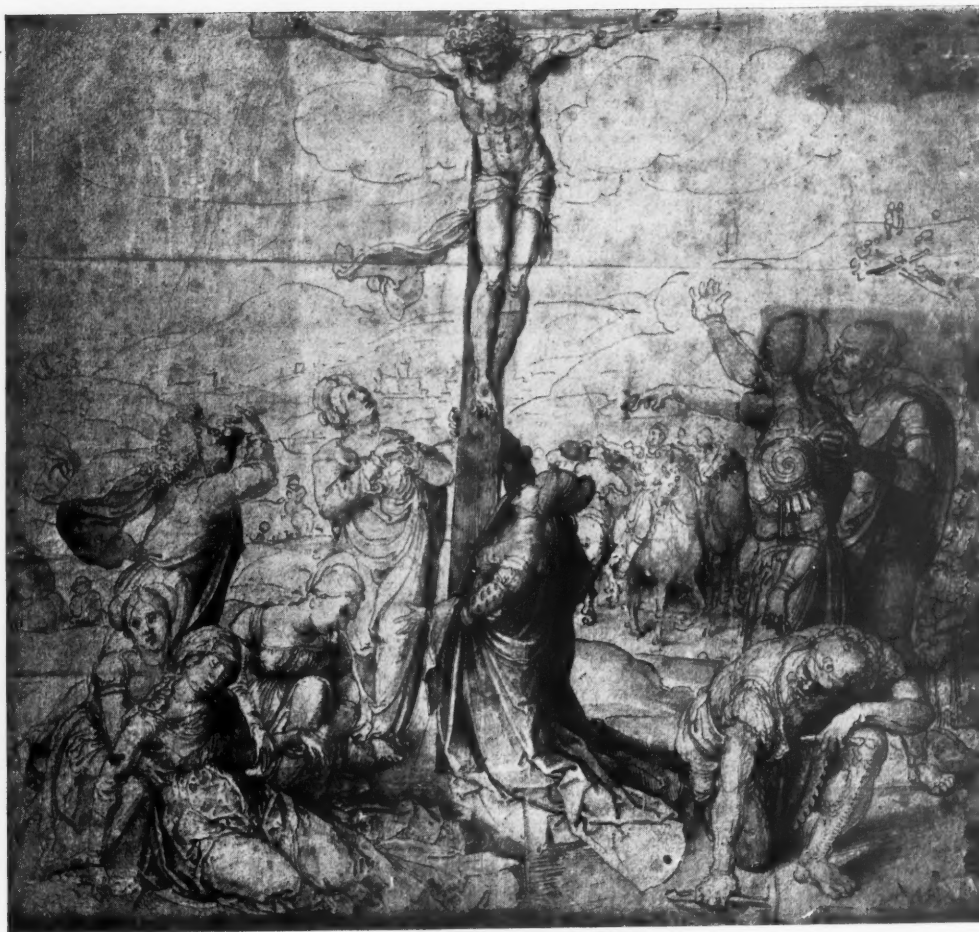


FIG. 1. BERNARD VAN ORLEY: THE CRUCIFIXION
Drawing

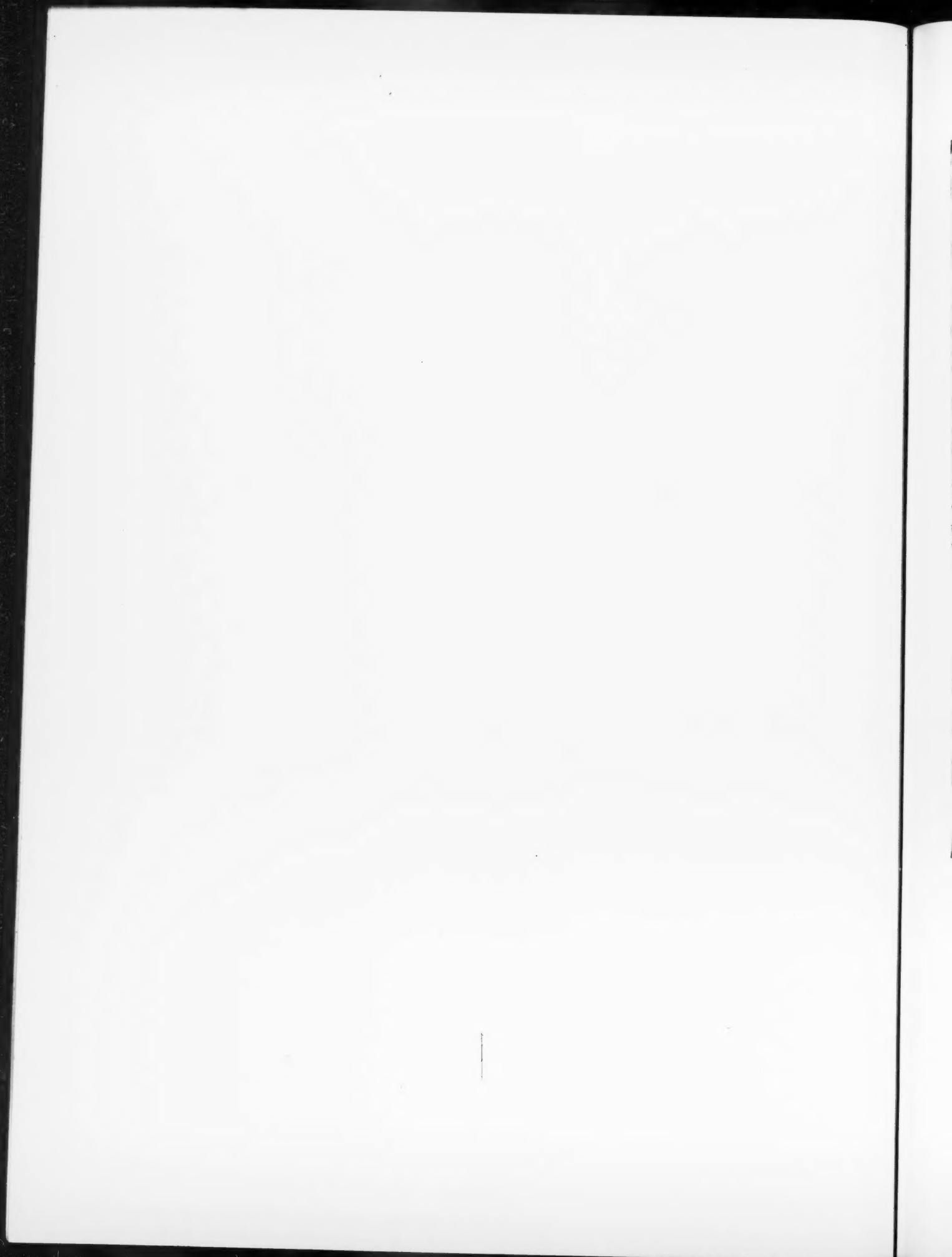
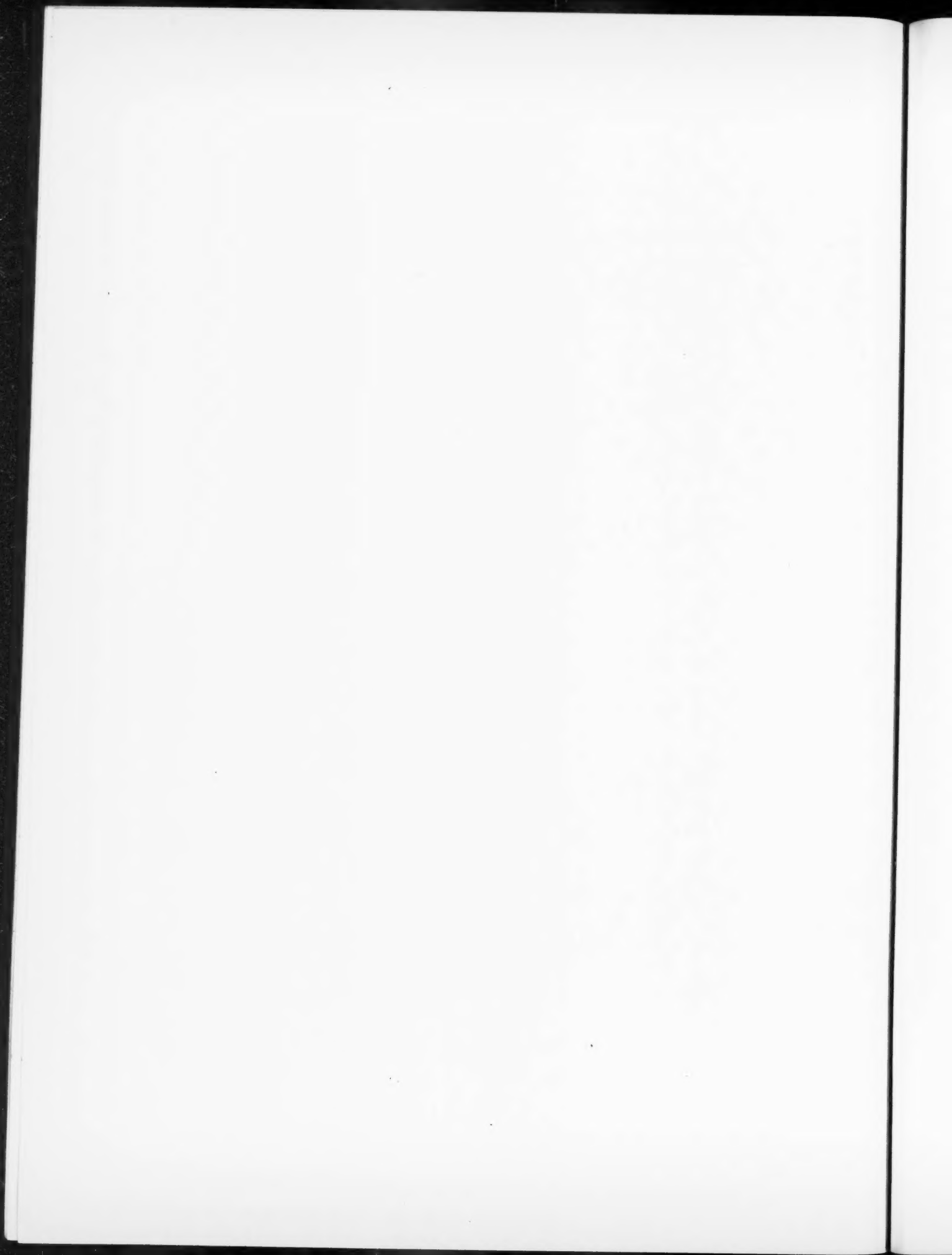




FIG. 2. FLEMISH (BRUSSELS) TAPESTRY ABOUT 1525, AFTER THE DESIGN BY VAN ORLEY
Collection of Joseph E. Widener, Philadelphia



MARGERY AUSTEN RYERSON

IN contrast to imitative art-faddists the original artist assimilates varied influences in order to create a spontaneous product. Miss Margery Ryerson of New York City accomplishes this in her work. She feeds her talent through an eclectic choice of the environment and mediums best adapted to its predestined development. She impresses one as an all-around woman who could do almost anything and do it well, indeed she has been in various sorts of educational work, but the call of an inevitable vocation was constantly growing stronger until it absorbed her. She is now one of the best known American interpreters of babyhood and childhood in pastels and drypoints.

The lower East-side settlements and nurseries open to her friendly approach. She interprets these little American-born foreigners as a woman and an artist enamored of children as if they were flowers — delicate blossoms some of them, sturdy little plants others, all of them with the honesty of childhood and its graceful spontaneity.

Her lovely little pastels of babies seem to be breathed onto the paper, so immediate and spontaneous is the impression, so inevitable is the curve of the arm, the perspective of the head, the outline of the face, whether the baby is crying, sleeping or gesticulating. They are flowers of the artist's imaginative interpretation, and yet they are real, warm, cuddling babies made to lie in the curve of a mother's arm.

In her children and nudes we see the true spirit of pastel — the evanescent yet immortal medium which is misunderstood by many artists. The bloom of pastel has the untarnished beauty of petals just open at dawn in her work: the color and line is sensuous yet reticent, impulsive yet intelligent, delicate yet vital, subtle yet sincere.

Her drypoints give to her conceptions of babyhood the distinction of the free fine touch of the real etcher. They present the exquisite improvisations of line which reveal the inmost nature of the tiny models. Her pastels and drypoints show the ability to suggest life by an austere economy of means. With a use of these mediums which is inspired rather than clever she makes her children live and breathe on the scrap of brown or grey paper or on the copper plate.

It is interesting to see this virtuoso in pastels and drypoints working in another medium — oil paints. Miss Ryerson has thoroughly assimilated her portrait training. We saw almost no traces in her work of the stamp of any instructor. One or two of her tangled-haired

youngsters have something of the quality of the "Spielers" by George Luks with whom she has never studied, but her children have neither the rollicking abandon of Luks' "Spielers" nor the decorative treatment of Jerome Myers' East-side children. They are observant little East-siders of rather pathetic origins facing life bravely according to their various racial predilections and characteristics. She is interested in them not only as an experimenter in pigment but as a student of economic conditions. Since her student days at Vassar social work has meant much to her.

"Muscle-bound" could not be applied as a criticism to any of her portraits — they are thrown off in a rather impromptu manner which is based, however, on thoughtful and trained technique. Each little individuality has found its way to the canvas over the threshold of the artist's discriminating judgment and serious intent. They have not the flashing dexterity which characterizes the Sargent type of portrait. The artist has not added one stroke to attain crisp perfection. Her oil portraits stop just where her creative impulse stops. As a result some of them look like portrait sketches rather than the accomplishment of a brush kept in hand to the last minute.

The pastels and drypoints are her most fluent means of expression at present — they can without exaggeration be called little works of genius — but her oil portraits are full of possibilities which stimulate the mental curiosity to look for the outcome of her use of this medium. Many of her pastels and drypoints are impressions of children in general — the slumber, the laughter, the tears of childhood, while each of her oil portraits is a study of a child as an individual. For this reason her oil portraits, even if less adorable, are richer in characterization and perhaps more forceful than her portrayal of children in other mediums.

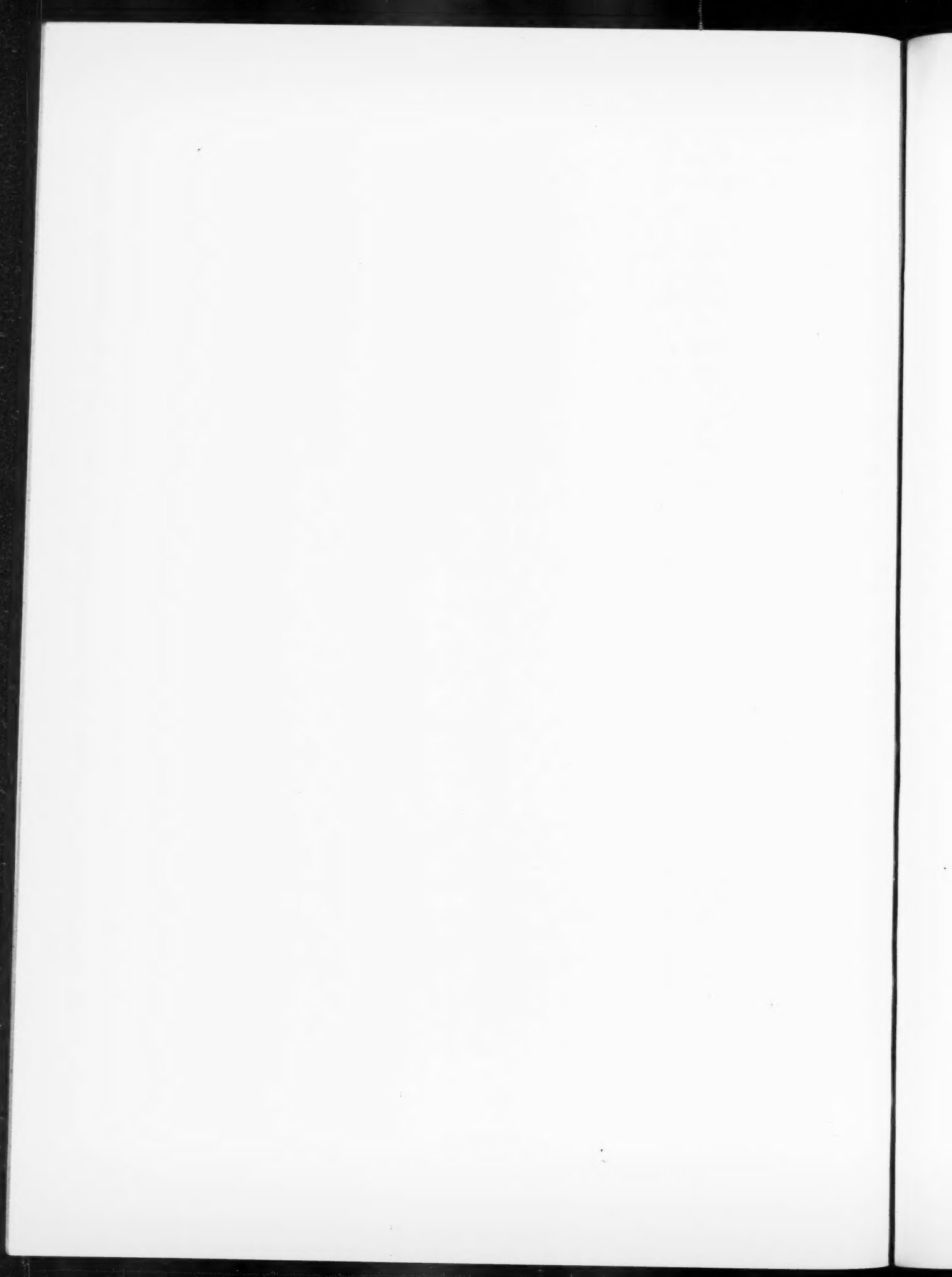
In her interpretation of childhood she gets out of herself and under the skin of her little subjects with an almost uncanny transmigration of spirit. Her baffling magic makes us forget the well-directed artistry of her technique and brings us face to face with childhood — its whimsies, its absorptions, its vivid yet evanescent moods. For many of these pictures the children did not pose formally, they were caught by the artist on the wing, revealing their moods as unconsciously as a bird between flights. She has flung her impressions on the copper plate, the bit of paper, the canvas before they had time to cool and stiffen. At first thought this might seem a more suitable method for the sketch in



MARGERY RYERSON: PISCILLA



MARGERY RYERSON: SNOWSTORM ON FIFTH AVENUE



pastel or water-color than for the oil portrait, yet the oil portrait which is based on the inspired transference of the first impression and then developed to its full measure in three dimensions is the great portrait which stands foursquare to every wind of criticism. It will be interesting to observe Miss Ryerson's personal solutions of the portrait painter's problem — the attainment of compactness without the sacrifice of spontaneity.

Among her oil portraits of children is her "Little Bridget," a sturdy Irish gamin with straggling yellow hair and twinkling brown eyes, posed in a white dress against a blue-green background. The artist also showed us a blue-eyed, mouse-brown haired little Irish girl, the easily molded immigrant child of good mentality who will grow from obscure origins into a valuable career unless the environment is all wrong. With a questioning look the child stands against a breeze-blown blue and white sky which suggests the clouds of Erin — her ancestral home.

Miss Ryerson paints a little Portuguese girl with blue-black hair and a dark blue dress gravely contemplating a rather queer America through the inscrutable dark eyes of the Latin alien; and in an independent somewhat introspective Portuguese boy with a rebellious pout and latent sparks in his dark eyes — a rich blue background heightens the pictorial effect of his sombre glance and tumbled black hair. There is an arresting force in the deeply observant eyes of these children.

She has so often summered in Provincetown that this coast village has become a part of her mental and artistic life. Her oil portraits of grown folks include a trio of Provincetown characters — Captain Cook, an old fisherman, whose face and pose indicate the latent strength of the wrestler with the elements; a lean-cheeked farmer seated in a salient pose struggling with a goose on his lap; and, best of all, "The Town-crier," a tart old Yankee personality salted with humorous independence, the glance keen and sardonic, the white hair obstreporous, the red tie in a breezy knot.

In her exquisitely vital pastels and drypoints of childhood and babyhood among the foreign-born poor she practically has the field to herself. It is a delight to view these pastels, the artist so skilfully suggests children's moods; the drowsy pose of a baby with the rosy flush of slumber and a little ripe red sleeping mouth; in another pastel, a row of kiddies in high chairs — each little pose caught by the magic

of the imaginative technician. In her pastel of a child in the window of a settlement house the sombre feeling of slum-life is enlivened by a child's face, flowers on the sill and a soft glow on the red brick tenement just outside the window. She gives us in a little golden pastel of a nervous fine-fibred collie a glimpse of what she can do in animal studies. Among her little pastel nudes is a backview of a young woman, exquisite in color and line.

One of the most popular of her etchings is the Portuguese brother and sister — a sister holding her baby brother on her lap, unconsciously expressing the pathos of a little girl's responsibilities. A little masterpiece of humor is her etching of a whimpering baby. She has tenderness for old age as well as childhood. Her etching "Patchwork Quilt" shows a woman bending in old-ladyish concentration over the work in hand. Her etching based on a daguerreotype of her great great grandmother is a quaint study of a gentlewoman.

Her ability in landscape is shown by the oil painting "Twilight," an atmospheric rendering of New York City at the hour when prosaic conditions are veiled in lavender mystery. "Snow-storm, Fifth Avenue," one of her best oil paintings, portrays a gay tussle between the Avenue and a blizzard — the human spectacle tinged the white whirl with life and color, shovellers laboring, taxis struggling, ambient glow mingling with the whiteness of the snow. "The Bungalow," a Provincetown landscape, has the feeling of Summer earth with snug little cottages nestling close to it.

Catherine Beash Ely

NEW YORK

